



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH &  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## State Receives Funds to Benefit Youth in Eight Rural Tennessee Counties

Nashville - The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities was recently awarded \$2.5 million from the national Administration for Children and Families to benefit Tennessee's youth in eight rural counties over the next five years. This award is the result of a collaborative effort between TDMHDD, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, the Governor's Office of Children's Care Coordination, the Administrative Office of the Courts and Centerstone.

This initiative, *Partners for Family Strengthening and Preservation*, will ensure integrated services are provided for children, ages 0-18, who are in or at risk of an out-of-home placement as a result of a parent or caretaker who is abusing meth or other substances. Funds will allow therapists to provide intensive, in-home crisis intervention, counseling, life-skills education and referral for substance abuse and/or mental health treatment as well as other support services. Specialized training and the collaboration of service providers and other stakeholders will result in improved coordination of these much needed services.

"Too often children in rural counties do not receive much needed services due to lack of access to well-trained professionals needed to provide assistance," said TDMHDD Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts. "I am extremely pleased with the result of this collaborative effort. I know we can continue to work together in bringing funds to the areas that need it most, benefiting Tennessee's most vulnerable population, our children."

"Coming into state custody can be very traumatic for a child. This program will help reduce that trauma by helping youth stay in the home safely instead," said Dr. Viola P. Miller, commissioner of the state Department of Children's Services. "We need to do all that we can to keep families together - and to keep children safe."

A seamless continuum of care will be available for 270 families residing in Bedford, Cannon, Coffee, Franklin, Grundy, Lincoln, Moore and Warren counties.

"Meth use is at crisis level in parts of Tennessee. Centerstone welcomes this great opportunity to offer in-home intervention, counseling, life-skills education and behavioral health services for this imperiled population," said David C. Guth, Jr., CEO of Centerstone. "Through this new program, Centerstone will expand services to ensure the safety and well-being of children and their families affected by methamphetamine and other substance abuse."

To combat the problem of methamphetamine abuse in Tennessee, Governor Phil Bredesen signed the Meth-Free Tennessee Act into law in 2005 following intense study by the Governor's Task Force on Methamphetamine Abuse.

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For information on what Tennessee is doing to combat meth use visit [www.methfreetn.org](http://www.methfreetn.org). For additional mental health or substance abuse information, please contact TDMHDD's Office of Public Information and Education at (615) 253-4812 or visit [www.state.tn.us/mental](http://www.state.tn.us/mental).

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